

THE AMERICAN RECOVERY AND REINVESTMENT ACT WORKSHOP

Presented by U.S. Senator Patrick Leahy & Governor James Douglas

March 6, 2009 - Burlington, Vermont

THE STIMULUS AND YOUR FAMILY

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act provides funding for services and programs which directly assist Vermonters during these difficult economic times. As this crisis spreads, threatening to harm our families, businesses, and communities, the federal government had a responsibility to act in order to jumpstart our slowing economy, create jobs here at home, and provide Americans with the assistance they so desperately need.

Vermont is expected to receive more than \$600 million in direct federal funding under this package with additional

funds coming to Vermont through competitive grant programs and through tax reductions for individuals and businesses.

A number of provisions in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will provide immediate assistance for hardworking Americans struggling during this economic downturn and relief for strained state budgets to prevent cuts to programs vital to Vermonters.

Specifically, the Act includes:

- One-time economic recovery payment of \$250 to all Social Security beneficiaries, SSI recipients and disabled veterans;
- Extension of COBRA benefits giving workers the option to continue their employer-provided health insurance through COBRA after their termination, with 65 percent of the cost paid for by the federal government;
- \$19.9 billion for Food Stamp benefits, equaling a 13.6 percent increase in benefits for households. **The average benefit for a household in Vermont would increase by \$32 a month and the average increase for seniors living alone would be \$20 per month;**
- \$150 million for funding for Food Banks and Pantries nationwide, **bringing \$272,000 in funding to Vermont's Food Banks;**
- \$15.64 billion for Pell Grants and increasing the Pell Grant financial aid award by \$500. College students qualifying for a Pell Grant could receive up to \$5,350 for 2009 and \$5,550 for 2010;
- **\$250 million in assistance to Vermont's Medicaid program** making it easier for Vermont to maintain and strengthen the state's Medicaid program through a temporary, across-the-board increase of the Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP);
- Increase in individual unemployment benefits by \$25 per week;
- Up to \$400 for workers (or \$800 for married couples) in the new Making Work Pay Tax Credit for **290,000 workers and their families in Vermont;**
- **\$2,500 for 5,000 additional families in Vermont** who will qualify for the new American Opportunity Tax Credit that makes college more affordable for 3.8 million families nationwide;
- \$5 billion for the Weatherization Assistance Program – **providing Vermont \$17.2 million** that will enable low-income families and seniors to permanently reduce their energy bills by making their homes more energy efficient;
- Extended and increased first-time Homebuyer Tax Credit to help aspiring homeowners and to help stabilize plummeting home prices.

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US Department of Labor

www.dol.gov/ebsa/COBRA.html

(866) 444-3272

US Social Security Administration

ssa.gov/payment

(800) 772-1213

USDA Rural Development

www.rurdev.usda.gov/VT

Robert McDonald
Housing Program Director

Internal Revenue Service

www.irs.gov

IRS Telephone Assistance for
Individuals
(800) 829-1040
IRS Telephone Assistance for Businesses
(800) 829-4933
The Taxpayer Advocate Service
(802) 859-1052

Vermont Department of Labor

labor.vermont.gov

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PO Box 488
Montpelier, VT 05601-0488
(802) 828-4000

Vermont Office of Economic Opportunity

dcf.vermont.gov/oeo/weatherization

103 South Main Street
Waterbury, VT 05671-1801
(802) 241-2450

Vermont Campaign to End Childhood Hunger

www.vtnohunger.org

vermontfoodhelp.com

180 Flynn Avenue
Burlington, VT 05401
(802) 865-0255

vtcech@vtnohunger.org

Vermont Low Income Taxpayer Project

(800) 889-2047

Central Vermont Low Income Tax Clinic

vtlawhelp.org

(802) 479-1053
(800) 639-1053

Vermont Student Assistance Corporation

vsac.org

(800) 642-3177

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recovery.vt.gov

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